

The Grooming Process.

Trafod Sexual Abuse and Trauma Centre.

Who's grooming who?

- The media's use of terms like:
- Child pornography.
- Paedophile.
- Give a highly misleading presentation of sexual abuse.
- It promotes "stranger danger".
- The majority of victims of sexual abuse are abused by someone they know.

Sexual Offending in the UK.

- In 2003/2004 sexual offences recorded by the police was 52,100
- In 2004/2005 sexual offences recorded by the police was 60,900.
- The rise in sexual offences recorded has been attributed to the inclusion of indecent exposure as a sexual offence.
- Home Office Statistical Bulletin July 2005.

Sexual offences against children.

- Between 2004/2005:
- Sexual assaults on a female 13 years or over 14,635.
- Sexual assaults on a male 13 years or over 1,292.

The offence of grooming.

- The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced an offence of sexual grooming.
- This is an offence of meeting a female or male child following sexual grooming which involves prior communication with the victim. Whilst this could be committed over the internet it is not necessarily the case.
- There were 185 such offences recorded by the police in England and Wales in 2004/05.

What is meant by the term grooming?

- For an offence to take place a clearly recognisable process is involved.
- Firstly, the offender has to be motivated.
- Secondly, the offender has to overcome his or her internal disinhibitors.
- Thirdly, the offender has to overcome the external disinhibitors.
- Fourth, the offender has to overcome the child's resistance to being offended against.

The online groomer.

- The online groomer is a person who has initiated online contact with a child with the intention of establishing a sexual relationship involving cyber sex or physical sex.
- Child pornography is used to 'groom' the child - it is shown to the child to lower that child's inhibitions concerning sexual activity.

Grooming processes...

- The offender may use a "poor me" presentation to elicit the sympathies of the child.
- His girlfriend has left him etc.
- He was bullied and has no friends he can trust.
- A gradual introduction of sexual references.
- The sharing of a "special relationship" in which she is the only one who understands him.
- Or if you end contact I'll kill myself.

More grooming processes...

- He may encourage discussion about the way that her parents don't understand her.
- He may draw on the child's isolation.
- Experience of bullying.
- With growing familiarity he will use all this information as an adult to ensure greater contact.
- Encouraging the idea that the relationship is their secret.

Case one.

- A nineteen year old man arrested after an illegal image of a child being sexually abused was found on his computer.
- He lives with his partner and three young children.
- He was sexually abused as a child by his grandfather.

Case two.

- Forty five year old male.
- Divorced and his daughter aged thirteen lives with him.
- Convicted of distributing leaflets in schools in the South Wales area providing a telephone number for gay sex.
- Computer shows extensive collection of sexually abusive images of children.
- Further conviction for attempting to use a chat-room to groom a young boy.

Case three.

- 50 year old South Wales business man.
- Convicted of grooming a fourteen year old girl.
- He had used a chat-room to make contact, used this to establish contact out of the chat-room Presenting himself as a seventeen year old student.
- Enticed out of her details of sexual experiences to blackmail her into giving details of where she lived to force a contact.

Case four

- Male aged 45.
- Step son aged 9 found his mother dead after she had given birth to his sister.
- Twelve months later the stepfather was arrested under operation Ore.
- The home was described as “permeated in pornography”.
- Step son makes highly sexualised drawings involving five males not members of the family.
- He stated that he was fed up of being “camerad”

Case six.

- Female aged twenty five.
- Arrested after phoning the emergency services saying that she’d seen a body of a girl in the river.
- She admitted that she used the internet to groom girls for her partner to abuse them.
- She stated that one of the fantasies she and her partner shared was to groom a girl in order to kill her.
- Her partner is a multiple convicted sexual offender.

The impact of abuse on victims.

- We know that 1 in 6 children have experience of abuse.
- We know that 95% of child victims make no disclosure about their abuse.
- That they are effectively silenced by their abuser often until adulthood.
- How do we offer help to children who have been abused by use of the internet?

Questions and answers.

- How do we protect children from sexual abuse through the internet or any other form?
- Abuse can only ever occur through secrecy!
- Its important to get the message across in our community in a clear and non-sensational form.
- Sexual abuse is a serious problem in our society and we ignore it at our children’s peril.

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